**Leigh Croteau**

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**EDU 583/580**

**Essential Belief Statement**

**In high school, I was not a good student. I was the kid that was in the back of the room sleeping. I was more concerned with working and making money than I was with learning. I worked after high school and it wasn’t until I had been a live-in nanny for a couple of years that I started to think about college. The kids I was responsible for were lower elementary age and I really enjoyed them. It was my dad’s idea to go for PE.**

**When I started to teach, I didn’t have any deep seated reasons why teaching PE was something I had to do. I knew it sounded fun and I wanted to teach a subject that the students would be interested in. Most kids love to be active and play games. As I have progressed as a teacher, I have discovered that it is important to me to be the PE teacher that I never had. I want my students to feel confident in their ability to move and to have the self-esteem to join any team or group they would like. The challenge has been to show them that in addition to being physical, there is also learning that happens in PE.**

**My ideal teaching environment in relationship to teaming and collaboration would be one where it would be volunteer and not mandatory. I feel very strongly about my subject matter and what I need to teach the students. Because I only see them once a week, I need to be selective about what they will be learning. I do see the benefits to teaming and collaboration but not having done it, I would be hesitant to give up full control of my subject material.**

**I have just started my sixth year as a teacher and my sixth year with MSAD 15. Just this year I have become the certification rep for one of my schools. This is the only leadership position I have been involved with. I will admit to being hesitant to discuss matters with the principal. I do not feel confident that my principal will deal with issues professionally. This has caused me to swallow a lot of opinions and suggestions that I might have shared.**

**In looking at my learning styles inventory, it seems to say that I learn best with people and with moving and manipulating. If I interpreted it correctly, I agree with that. It also seems to go along with my chosen profession as a PE teacher. I am constantly moving and interacting with the students.**

**The Russell Elementary School vision (sung to Twinkle, Twinkle) is:**

**We the students of Russell School,**

**Promise to be respectful.**

**Happy, healthy, friendly too.**

**Kind and caring helping you.**

**Working hard and focusing,**

**Helps us learn important things.**

**This vision connects greatly with my classroom. I am a great believer in teaching affective behaviors. I believe that K-2 students need to learn social cues as well as academic ones. In my class we have three rules: taking care of yourself, taking care of each other, and taking care of the things we use. When looking back at the vision, the words that pop out to me are respectful, healthy, caring, and working hard. These are all important qualities that I work hard to instill in my students.**

**Like most teachers, I do not spend the time that I should on my lesson plans. Having five classes a day, all different grades, I feel that I don’t have the time to dedicate to my lesson plans. When I do my planning, I do plan backwards which I find very helpful. I know what I want to teach them each lesson and I know what my end goal is. Unfortunately I do not often mention the ‘why’ of what we are learning and how it can be used in different situations. This is what I would like to learn in this class. I would love to have a lesson plan that will help me tie everything together.**